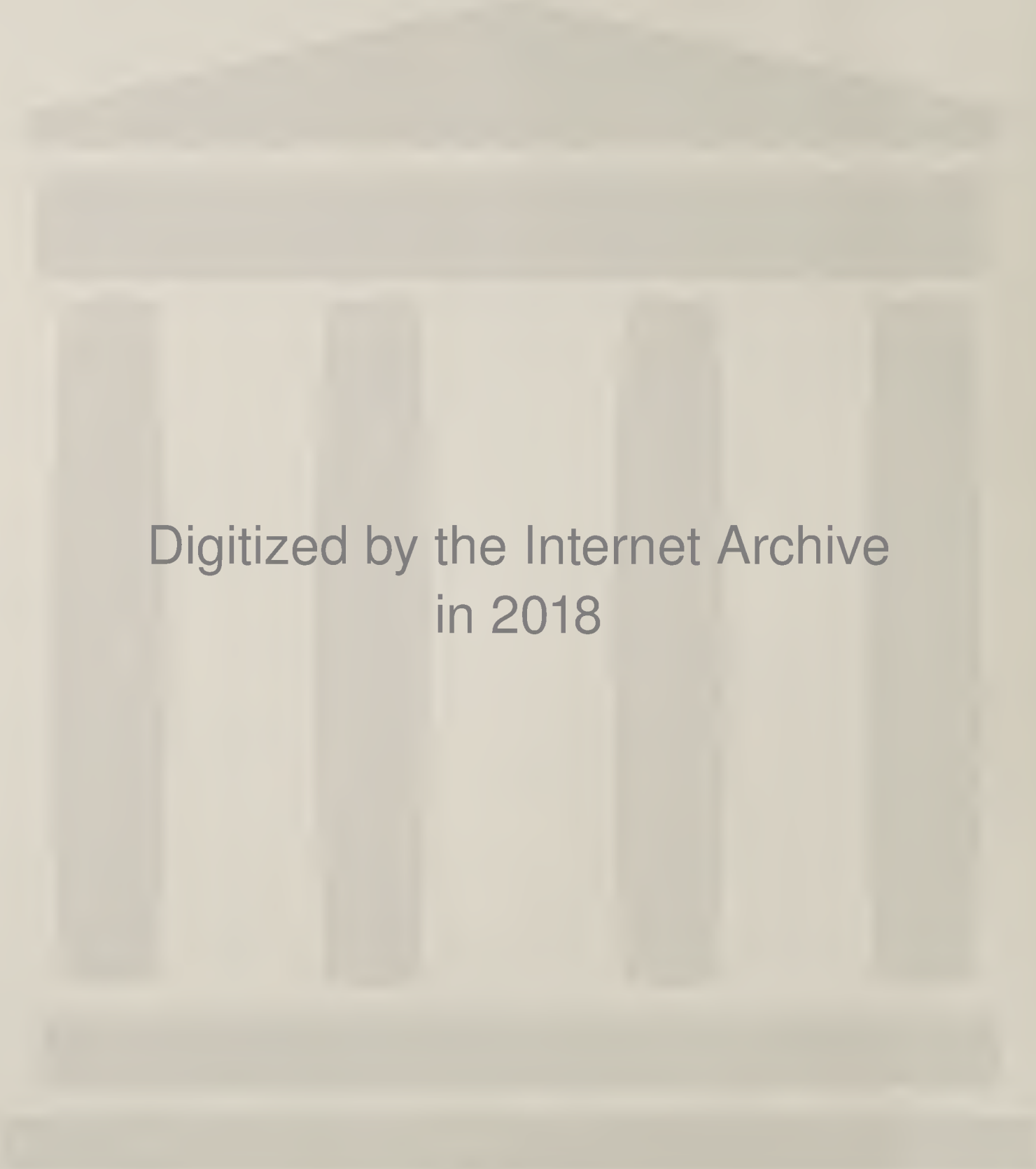




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DOWN MEMORY LANE

by Nancy Hartman Smith

As age creeps up and time begins to slip by so fast, we tend to sit back and reflect on the growing-up period in our lives and the changes that have been made; some of it brings fond memories, some brings tears to our eyes and some brings recollections to our minds that we thought were forgotten while all the time we are learning what life is all about. We are given a sense of belonging, of being loved and cared for, or as someone has aptly put it, we have "Roots." I have heard that the mind is like a computer - everything you see or hear is recorded and can be brought back to your mind at some time. Sometimes we can remember incidents that happened many years ago, but we can't seem to remember what happened just yesterday.

The first incident that comes to my mind happened when I was about four years of age. I remember standing on a big bridge over the Verdigris River and calling out for "Mamma". I could hear voices drifting down the river bend to me, calling out "giddap" or "whoa" to a team of horses. Listening quietly, I knew it was the voices of my Mom and Dad as they worked in a cornfield close to the river but at some distance from me. Voices seemed to drift for a long way as everything was so quiet. I had been left in the care of my sister, Maggie, twelve years my senior, who was doing the housework and was to prepare the evening meal for the family. I had slipped out unnoticed; and upon discovering me gone, Maggie searched the house with no results - she became frantic and ran out in the front of the blacksmith shop (we lived in the house part behind) - searching for me. As she looked down the street, she saw a friend, George Demler, coming back to town with me in his arms. He explained, he had seen me go by his place; and knowing I was too small to be alone, followed me the half mile west of town, careful not to scare me. He persuaded me to let him bring me home. Needless to say, this was a relief to Maggie, knowing what could have happened and the consequences awaiting her, had I been lost.

We lived in the small town of Hilltop, Kansas, where everyone knew each other, their habits, and was interested in helping each other. Our town was nestled below the winding hills from which it had received its name. Ours was a large family, five daughters and two sons; one son had died of diphtheria in Oklahoma as a child of eight years, whose name was Charles William. Laura, the oldest daughter was married and living in Indiana; Amanda, the second daughter was working at a hotel in Gridley, Kansas, the town we had moved from on coming here. Jacob was working for a farmer named T. Winzeler just out of town. Emma, Maggie, John and I were still at home. My father was the town's blacksmith, a jeweler, and also a farmer on the side. Years before, my father had been kicked by a horse he was "shoeing", and his back was injured, so my Mom was always at his side when he worked in the fields helping him, as also was the children who were old enough to work. Our town boasted a General Merchandise store selling hardware, household items, materials and foods (later a post office was added to the back part of the store); a railroad station where passenger trains stopped; and a stockyard where cattle was loaded onto the stock cars; a lumberyard; a meat market which didn't last long; a town hall with a cafe on the ground floor and where Sunday School and religious services were held on the second floor; public scales; and an Ice house. Later, a garage was built - also a large hotel. Family homes nestled on both sides of the one main street; and of course, many farms dotted the country side close to town.

Our blacksmith shop was quite a gathering place, as I recall. In the evenings, the men around town and those who came in to town for supplies would sit around spinning yarns, discussing politics and government as this was about the time of the First World War. My sister, Emma, got married; and soon her husband, John Strauch, and my brother, Jake, were called into service - Jake being taken to Germany, but the war ended before John would have to overseas. Neither was injured, but a terrible flue epidemic took many of the young men at the camp where John was located.

Some families that lived in that area were: the Gueseys, Joe and Henry Beuchats, Henry and Joe Fechters, Albert Koenigs, Joe Doans, T. Winzeler, Abe Sauder and Chris Sauders, Frank Planks, the Johnsons, the Abbeys, the Bocks, the Fankhausers, and the Ernest Bennetts.

Since my brother, John, was seven years older than me, I either had to find my own entertainment or seek friends my own age. My special friends were Ruby Koenig; the Abbey children, Opal and Eldey; the Doan children, George and Arlone; and the Johnson children. Members of my family always made sure I had many dolls, doll furniture, dishes, etc. My sister, Emma, gave me a red rocking chair when I was a year old (in 1980 when I first wrote this article, I still had the chair, which had the rockers broken and removed and had been painted many different colors over the years). (In 1987, I gave the little chair to my youngest granddaughter for her little son; it has been renovated and will last many more years.) I played with things from my Dad's blacksmith shop, like wheels with an axel holding them together. I would ride all around the yard on them. I became a regular pack-rat, saving mementoes, pictures, things other people threw away. I even have things my brother sent me while he was in the World War.

The young people of the town and surrounding farms also would gather after work hours and on holidays and make their own entertainment, playing ball, games like "go sheep go" "hide and seek", and others. We younger children weren't allowed to interfere; but one evening one of the seekers asked if I knew where his opponents had hidden, and I told them - was I ever given the "what for". Eldey Abbey and I used to play horse - one would pretend to drive the other holding a piece of rope. One evening I ran into a barbed wire that had been strung up around the barnyard that day and cut a deep gash in my left cheek, almost the shape of a half-moon. I carry that scar to this day. Brother John also cut a gash in his right cheek one day when a group of children was playing the game of blackman.

My brothers and sisters loved to tease me. John and Maggie especially enjoyed standing in the doorway pretending a conversation with others; and when I attempted to see to whom they were talking, they would keep me back from the door. Or they would be getting ready to go someplace, and I'd ask to go along. They would reply, "You can go", all the time shaking their head and saying "No" over and over until in disgust, I'd run to my parents. My brother, Jake, loved to tickle me or put me across his lap and pretend to spank me, not realizing he hit me much harder than he thought, and I usually ended up crying.

My sister, Maggie, had been born with a slight problem - tublar vision - seeing only that which was directly in front of her; and I remember John would deliberately set a chair or some object in front of her that was low enough she couldn't see it and watch her stumble over it. Maggie played the organ beautifully, at least I thought so. She learned to crochet, and she watched over me a lot when my parents were out working.

When John was about ten or eleven years old, an incident happened in our lives that will always stand out in my memory. Jake had an old Buick car. He had been working for T. Winzeler and decided to buy a Ford touring, so he traded his Buick to our Dad. He had come home during the weekend from work, and usually spent the time teasing his sisters. Dad was working on the Buick and had John hold a lantern close so he could see better; some gas dripped onto the lantern, causing an explosion, throwing fire onto John's pant leg. John began screaming - Jake looked up and saw the flash of fire, ran out the back door of the house, grabbed an old rug hanging on the clothes line as he went by, and took out after John. who was trying to run from the fire, and hit him, knocking him down to the ground. He rolled him into the rug to put out the fire, saving John's life, even though his leg was badly burned. It was a terrible burn, taking months to heal - so much pain. It left his leg stiff with John walking on crutches. The scar covered his leg, leaving only the imprint of his supporters on it. A friend, Olive Beuchat, worked in the grocery store, which belonged to the Guesey family. She was fond of John and coaxed him to come in and sit on the counter when she wasn't busy; and she would rub his leg and move it a bit - then, she would give him a piece of fruit or candy; she did this day after day, moving his leg a little more, finally enabling him to throw away the crutches. We will always be grateful for friends like Olive; she was so good to me also, coaching me to sing, tempting me with a piece of fruit or candy also.

Our farm town was a stopping-off place for hobos riding freight trains; section hands, who worked awhile, then moved on; mexican workers seeking jobs; bachelors, as well as families, who moved there, then moving on to a better job. Many of them stopped to talk at the blacksmith shop; and my Dad was always helping someone out with a meal, or trying to find them a place to spend a night or so. Earl, who later became my brother-in-law by marrying my sister, Amanda, came into our lives when he came into town riding on a freight train with some of his pals. There were three bachelors that come to mind, who lived in Hilltop for some time. John Tuball, who lived with his dogs, had property up on the hillside and was the butt of many jokes by the young people of the countryside; Henry Jaguar, who ran the post office for a time, tried to be a ladies man - but Mom and Dad didn't trust him around children; Hans Albertson, originally from Denmark and later sold his place, carrying the money in his pocket - he was to go back home, but was never heard of again - some people wondered if someone had robbed him and then done away with his body. He had given me a pup, which I named Bismark and called "Bis" for short; and the dog and I were constant companions. Bis got too close to a train backing up on the tracks; and it ran over his tail, cutting it off. Sometimes, he would follow Dad to the fields; and one day, Dad was using a machine called a disk with a long wooden arm and a small disk on the end, which would mark the next row - this arm fell hitting Bis on the head, causing him to develop times when he would have "fits". Dad was afraid

the dog might hurt me when he was in this condition, so had my brother-in-law, John Strauch, put him to death. Oh!, how I cried and cried for my companion. It took some time for me to recover the loss. Henry Jaguar was always coming by the blacksmith shop. He also came into the house, teasing my sisters; and sometimes picking me up on his lap. One day Dad saw me on his lap and told me to get down. Not really understanding why, I didn't do it; and he picked up a small buggy whip, and I received the only spanking that I can remember getting from my Dad. Our parents were very strict with their family. Each was expected to do chores; help with the work in the fields, as we were a poor family and each was expected to do his or her part around the house. I suppose they had their pets, at least John always accused me of being my Dad's pet. I was told Emma was favored too, but she told me about one time she had disobeyed Dad while out working; and he threatened her with a big club - the first thing he picked up. She told him if he struck her - she would leave home.

My father tried to be a good provider and had his hand in many things to be able to support his family. Besides being a farmer, blacksmith, jeweler, and fisherman, he was also a beekeeper. We always had plenty of honey besides that which he sold from his many hives of bees. When he took the honey from the hives, he would wrap mosquito netting around his body, put on gloves, smoke his pipe, and blow smoke around himself. I don't recall him ever being stung. There were many trees in our area, and they lined the river banks of the Verdigris. Many times the swarms of bees would light in the hollow of a tree or on the limbs; and my Dad would call us all together to beat on pans, making a lot of noise, even throwing dirt in the air to get the bees to settle down when he saw them flying around. Later, when they had quieted down, he would gather them in a hive and add to his collection.

My Dad also liked to fish, but usually was too busy to sit on a bank with a pole. He would take John or someone along, and they would set out trout lines from a boat, or set traps to catch them, running them as they called it each day, bringing in many times a tubful of fish - sharing them with the people of the town.

I seem to be rambling as I write, but many incidents seem to bring more things to mind, and I must record them or lose them. Our parents loved us and watched over us as best they could, even while working. When I was a baby, I was told I had two child diseases at one time; and Mom and Dad were afraid they might lose me when I was around two years old. I was very ill, and Dad insisted having a photograph taken of me. No doubt, they were thinking about the son, Charles, who had died at the age of seven and a half of the dreaded disease, diptheria. At that time, the only photograph they had of him was taken after he died. They also had a family picture taken of the rest of them at that time. We had a large flag that my Dad would have stretched over the street in Hilltop on holidays and special occasions. His desire was to have the flag wrapped around him in his coffin when he died. This was done, as I recall, as I was only eight when he died. I can't remember his reason for it. I have a picture of Emma with this flag.

The street of our town crossed the railroad track, then wound its way up a big hill, and then flattened out for a short distance to our school at

the top of the hill. It was quite tiring for us smaller children to climb this hill; but coming home was different, and many times we would come home for lunch. My sister, Laura, and her daughter, Lula, came to visit us from Indiana; and Lula went to school with us while there. One particular day, as we came home for lunch, John ran on ahead of us; and by the time we got to the bottom of the hill, a train was across the tracks blocking our way. Lula didn't want to walk to the end of the train, so she crawled beneath it, just as it was preparing to start up. Needless to say, I tattled on her when I got home; and she received a spanking; and then Laura went into the bedroom to cry, knowing what could have happened to her.

George Doan, a mischevious kid who lived next door to us, had quite a memory. His mother would read him the lessons at home, and he would say them by memory at school. He was always tormenting someone or getting in bad with the teacher, Miss Rose Neuensuander. One day I saw her so angry with him, she put him across the desk and spanked him with a yard stick, breaking it in three pieces; and he went back to his seat laughing. Miss Rose, as we called her, was also my teacher, as she taught all eight grades; and since the school had so few students with perhaps one or two in some classes, she could give each student much attention and personal help. I passed two classes that first year. Christmas was always such a special time for me, and the children were practicing for weeks ahead on the program of skits, dialogues, recitations, and making decorations for the tree and our room - also small gifts for each other and their parents. We decorated the tree with strings of popcorn and cranberries and colored chains of papers, also small candles in a snap-type holder to be lit on that special night. Usually the night of the program, there would be snow on the ground; and one could feel the wonder of the night as the people came to see the children perform. Some would walk, some driving teams of horses, and all stamping the snow and calling out to each other. I don't remember any musical instrument being played, but I can still hear the songs that everyone participated in, especially the deep male voices in the background.

We called George Doan the neighborhood mischief maker; he was two years older than me, so I was on the receiving end of many of his pranks and some very painful ones. He was always talking back to his parents, and I'm afraid they let him get by with it. He was arguing with his Dad one time, and his Dad said to his wife, Anna, "Make George call me decent"; and I heard George snikering to himself as he walked away saying "Hi, Decent". One day as Mrs. Doan built the fire in her wood stove to start the evening meal, she kept hearing the painful sounds of a cat meowing. She began to search and discovered George had put his cat in the oven after he tired playing with it. The poor little thing was just hopping around and around as the oven began heating up. George stuttered a lot; and when asked his name, he would say, "My name is G-g-geo-george Sh-sh-shred-shedrick McTilda May Doan". His name was George Fredrick Doan, and he added the rest of the name because he liked a girl named Tillie and another one named May.

The Beuchat family lived just a couple houses down the street from us. They had an open well at their place that had a sort of a frame built over it with a pulley and rope to draw the water. They usally kept a tub sitting there on the well curb for the animals to drink from. There was also two

barns behind our neighbors, the Abbeys and Beuchats, and Dad kept his horses in them. When he came in from the fields and unhitched the horses, he always took them to drink before putting them in the barn; and if I were close enough around, he would lift me onto a horse to ride, as he led them to the well. One evening I was riding and holding onto the reins. As the horses were so thirsty, they began to drink right away, and off I went, still holding on tight to the reins. Dad grabbed ahold of my dress, and I tumbled into the tub of water. I would probably have fallen into the open well had he not been there.

Living in town and running a blacksmith shop, my Dad always had to rent ground to plant his crops on. Besides all this, my Dad owned a Bull tractor and threshing machine to thresh the wheat and oat crops for the farmers around that part of the country. He rented the Alice Evan's place just a few miles distant between Hilltop and Virgil. The folks always planted vegetables, corn, feed for the animals, and sugar cane, which was used to make molasses. There were several kinds of apple trees on this place too. They would put the apples through the cider mill, grinding the juice for cider and using the pulp to make apple butter, and put some apples in a barrel that Dad had buried, to keep for the winter. When the cane was ready to be harvested, the leaves were stripped off while it was still standing in the field. The stalks were then cut and hauled to a mill he had made, where it was ground using a horse to turn the mill by pulling an arm that made gears go around and around. The juice would drain off and was later cooked to make molasses. Sometimes, John would feed the mill. The day I remember most, he was at work with old blind Fred, our horse, hitched to the arm. Somehow, one of the gloves John was wearing got caught in the gears and before Dad could get the horse stopped and backed up, the gears pulled John's hand into them. John's hand was injured very bad; and while John was screaming, Dad hooked the other horses to the buggy and with John on Mom's lap, they went flying down the road to Virgil to find a doctor. My poor brother, John, had been hurt many times in his life - when he was small, one of his sisters spilled hot gravy on him; he was also burned with gasoline in a fire in Wiley, Colorado, as my folks moved to Kansas; he also had his small finger cut almost off when he was real small. Well, he survived all this, and on with my story about molasses - the cane juice was cooked slowly for hours with one stirring it constantly with a wooden paddle and skimming off the green scum that formed on the top. When this was cooked off, and it thickened to the right consistency, the fire was allowed to go out, the liquid to cook, and it was later poured into jugs. Much of this was sold to help our family make a living.

Times were very hard for our family, even with each working to do their part, especially if it was a dry year - not only for our own crops, but for the farmers in the community who would bring work into the blacksmith shop, but was unable to pay for it. Also, by this time Amanda and Earl had married and moved to Oklahoma; Maggie and Axel had married; as did Emma and John Strauch. As I mentioned earlier in my memories, America was in the World War I. Jake had been in Germany in the Army; John, Emma's husband was in Camp Funston, preparing for overseas duties in boot camp during the flu epidemic, but came through it okay, not having to go overseas when the war ended. I saw my first airplane flying through the clouds at this time, which

was a real thrill for one so young.

Our parents decided to give up the shop and to rent a farm, which they did, several miles away from Hilltop on the other side of Lamont, to try to raise a crop. We had an old Maurian car, but not horses at that time, so Dad made a trade with Axel for a team, and we began our move. Mom decided to continue to help our friends, the Henry Fechter family at butchering season, house cleaning time, and through the harvest. All of this kept her away from home days at a time because of the transportation problem, but the family needed the money. My father and I went back to Hilltop for the last load of blacksmith equipment. We had the wagon by the open door, when something frightened the horses; and they started to run. Dad saw them and ran behind the wagon to catch it, and swung himself into it, and got the reins in his hands and stopped them. I was so afraid he would be hurt. Moving to Lamont was a bad mistake, as it was a very dry year. Nothing would grow, not even hay for the horses, so things got worse. Our school was a couple miles away, so John and I had to walk, regardless of the weather. When Mom was away from home working, I would ask my teacher at school to comb and braid my hair; because Dad couldn't seem to do it right. She was very good to us, even though very strict. There were four pupils in my class, and we just could not seem to get our time tables in arithmetic through our heads. The teacher had been very patient with us; but at last, her patience wore thin, and she gave us a deadline to have them learned or a spanking. The eventful morning came, and the first pupil made several errors, receiving a spanking. The second one had their answers correct. Now it was my turn, I got through the threes just fine, but more than a bit nervous; and as I got about half through the fours, I begin to stumble with my answers, said the wrong one but immediately corrected it, and finally finished the rest okay - that was too close for comfort. Our parents finally decided to move again - this time back to the Alice Evan's place we had rented for a time, so that the folks could both find work among the farm families they knew so well, and John and I would be closer to a school. This was indeed a much better place for us.

The condition of my Father's health was no better. I remember him saying many times, it was hard for him to swallow; and when eating, he sometimes held his head up high seemingly to make it easier. At this time, Amanda, Earl, and their son Lewis, who had moved back to Kansas some time just before, were staying with us waiting to take possession of a farm west of Virgil they were going to rent. Dad kept feeling sicker, and I shall forever remember November 1, 1921. During the night he got so bad that Earl got up and went to our neighbors across the road from us, the Henry Fechters, and asked to borrow their car to take Dad to the doctor at Gridley. That morning, John and I and the Fechter children were just coming out of their driveway on our way to school, when we saw Earl and Dad coming, and we waved goodbye and shouted at them. That was the last time we saw our Father alive. Our school was District 2 and was about two miles distant. We went on our way laughing and talking, as children do. The morning passed; and as we went outside for our lunch period, we noticed a young person walk up to the teacher with a note. She called John and me to her side and told us she had received a message saying our father was dying and to come home immediately, and we both started out in a high run. Mom was kneeling by his bedside when we came in, but my

Dad was already dead. What a terrible blow for me, as I was only eight years old and had always been so close to my father. The doctor had been called; and I remember when he came in, Mom was still beside the bed weeping. The doctor did not even look at my Dad; instead he said, "Where is the medicine I gave him?" Mom pointed to the shelf by the clock. He took the medicine out and put it in his car before he came in to examine him. I will always think something was very wrong for this situation - could he have given the wrong medicine?

Dad's body was taken care of by a mortuary, but left right there in the room. Friends and neighbors came and set up all night. Others brought food for the family and were very helpful, as my father had been well liked in the community. His funeral was performed there at the house also, and he was laid to rest at the Madison Cemetery.

Now, there was only Mom to make a living for us. John was too young and only in the seventh grade at school. Mom examined a ledger that Dad kept his work accounts in from threshing, blacksmith jobs, cutting wood and all the odd jobs he did for friends and neighbors - so very many unpaid bills; and they remained so from then on. Mom heard that an oil lease was being sold and remembered Dad had bought into this some time before. We were told if we had the papers on our share we could get the money for it. We searched the place from top to bottom and found them in an old coat of Dad's in a trunk. We received \$30.00 for our part. Mom sold one of the horses we called Bird. She also sold and gave away the farm machinery and blacksmith tools, as we had no use for them. We kept the horse, Babe, and a cow; and used the horse to bring the cow from our neighbor's pasture and to pull a small plow, as we stayed on the Evan's place. John began working now and then for neighbors and finally quit school. Mom continued to do washings, ironings, housecleaning, cleaning school houses in the community and helped neighbors at whatever they were doing - even helped them at butchering time and canning - besides putting in her own garden, raising corn and potatoes, with John and I doing what we could. John began to get real bossy with me. I had to ride the horse to pull the small plow, and John would guide it to make the rows for our seeds. If I didn't go as straight as he thought I should, he would shout at me; and one time he got so angry, he hit me in the back with a clod of dirt, knocking me from the horse. I ran to the house crying, and Mom rushed out to check on us and then tried to catch him to punish him, but he was too fast for her and kept just out of reach. My Mom worked so hard all her life. While Dad was alive, she worked in the fields with him - she was one of threshing crew, taking care of the grain as it was threshed, besides having bore eight children, raising them; and then to continue on with such a heavy burden by herself after Dad's death. John finally got a steady job on the Schindler farm and lived at their place with them, coming home only on weekends. Mom kept our cow for awhile, pasturing it with the neighbor's animals. I would ride our horse, Babe, across the river ford and out into the pasture to bring her home in the late afternoon, sometimes searching for some time - then finding her in a clump of bushes or in a creek to keep the flies off. I always started the horse out in a high run and down a hill. Mom had warned me many times I could get hurt. This particular day comes to mind. It had been raining hard, the ground was slippery; and as I started down the hill,

the horse slipped and fell to her knees, throwing me over her head to the ground in front of her, knocking the wind out of me. The horse didn't attempt to move until I was able to get up. Needless to say, I didn't tell Mom about this for a while.

The railroad tracks - Oh yes, I must not forget them, as they bring back so many incidents that happened concerning them. The section hands (as the men were called; and at that time, the foreman, Frank Plank) rode to and from their work on motor cars or a handcar, checking to see that the rails were okay, that rock ballasts were holding them secure, and the other many jobs that made the tracks safe for the passenger trains, and the freight trains with cattle cars, carrying the animals to distant cities - such an important link between the towns and cities of our state.

We lived about a quarter of a mile from the railroad, and we walked many miles over them during those years. It was nearly two miles to Hilltop to the store and post office, and Mom worked for the Ernest Bennett family who owned the store. They had four daughters; and with the mother spending time helping at the store, hired Mom to do weekly washings and ironings, housecleaning, and whatever needed doing. Of course, I had to go with Mom; and many times, we would pull a little wagon along the tracks to town to bring our groceries home. We had to be careful of snakes, copperhead snakes were poisonous; and they would lay along the railroad ties in the shade. Fortunately, we were never bitten. One day, my brother-in-law, Axel, carrying his son, Robert, and I were on our way to town; and we saw what looked like a person leaning against the tracks asleep. A train was coming toward us, but the man didn't move. Axel handed Robert to me and started running ahead to warn the man. The engineer had seen him too, and was trying to bring the train to a stop; but before he could, the cowcatcher had hit him and he just went rolling. When they got the train stopped, they took the man aboard, to take him to Virgil, the next town, to a doctor. We lived beside the Verdigris River, which began just a number of miles up north. When a big storm came up with it raining hard, as it did many times in that part of Kansas, the river would overflow, covering the neighbor's farm and cutting us off from the only road we had to get to higher ground. Maggie and Axel lived in Hilltop at this time, and I recollect one such time when the river was rising fast, Axel borrowed a handcar from the section foreman and came to get Mom and me. As we rode along, I remember being so scared as the water was so high, it nearly reached the bridge we had to cross to get to town. Another incident concerning the tracks, a farmer, Walter Bock, and his wife was returning home from an outing and came down the hill at Hilltop and a train hit their car dragging it down the track about a half mile before it could stop. It was a terrible sight that some of our folks saw immediately after it happened. It was evidently an "extra" train coming through that they didn't know about. We all hated to walk along the tracks for a long time afterwards.

As for the river, over the years we had lots of fun fishing, swimming, and playing in the water. Once John was down at the ford washing his car; he would drive around and around in the water to get the mud loose under the fenders. This day, I had rode down with him, standing on a fender. He told me to jump off, which I didn't; and he threw me off in the water as he circled and ran over my arm - luckily, I wasn't hurt much. One time, many years

before this, before my father died, John was hauling a wagon load of kafir corn across the ford with a team of horses. They slipped on a riffle in the river bed, throwing the feed and me off in the water; here too, John got me out before I was hurt. It seemed I got the worst end of the deal many times around this river. As I remember, around the year 1931 or 32, I remember Lester hauling a trailer load of kafir corn from a field across the river. He had no rope to tie it, so I laid on top of the load to hold it from slipping; and as he drove across the ford, he had to make a sharp turn upgrade; and as he did so, off I went and hit into a fence - again I was only scratched a bit and shook up.

We fished a lot in the river, as we loved the fresh fish; and too, we had no way of keeping any kind of meat fresh, so we would catch some and go to the house and immediately prepare a meal. Emma had been fishing one day, and caught some. She went to the house; and as some kids and I were gathering up the poles, etc., we picked up a sack laying on a rock that she'd been sitting on; and there was a snake under it. We told her about it, and she said she'd felt something move; but never again would she sit on any sack without looking first.

We used to set out lines to catch fish in the evenings and "run" them in the mornings. Sometimes our reward would be a nice big catfish for breakfast. One time, when it had rained hard and the river was rising, we set our hooks close to the shore, because the fish always came close to the banks to sip air when the water became dirty. I got up real early, knowing the water might get too high for us to reach the lines, to go and check on them. I pulled up a real big catfish - so big, it was hard for me to carry home with the lines too. Emma was real upset with me - she wanted to be the one to do it. In the summertime, we used to watch the sucker fish gather in "schools" and lie close to the surface of the water in the shade of some overhanging tree limbs or out in the sun. They were real large usually, but we didn't try to catch them, as they were too bony to eat.

Our schools went by district numbers in that part of the rural area of the country, and ours was District 2. The Henry Fechter children and I lived the farthest from our school in that direction. Most of the children walked, one or two had bicycles; and as they joined others on the way, would laugh, run and play along the road. If the weather was real bad, one of the Fechter family at home would come for their children in a buggy or wagon. Since we were neighbors, I rode with them. In my eighth year, just before Easter, a real bad snowstorm came up with lots of wind blowing the snow into huge drifts. Just before four o'clock, we could hear horses stamping, wagons rattling, and men calling out to the animals coming for the children. Mr. Fechter had his wagon filled with hay and warm blankets for us to wrap up in; and as we drove along, the storm really turned into a blizzard, so we could hardly see. The snow piled up so high in drifts, it was hard to get through even the main road. By the time we left the road, went over the tracks and started down the narrow road about a quarter of a mile from home, the snow had drifted so high, it was impossible for the horses to get through. It was up to their bellies, and the wagon got stuck too. The field beside the road belonged to the Fechters, so he took down a bit of the fence, lifted us out of the wagon and carried us to the field, as the wind had blown much of

the snow from the field onto the road; and we were able to walk the rest of the way home. He loosed the horses and got them home also through the field. By morning, the snow was so deep, we couldn't even get across the road to get milk from the neighbors.

In the center of our schoolhouse stood a big black pot-bellied coal stove for warmth. Miss Ruth Van Gundy, our teacher, suggested since we had to keep the stove going all the time, why not each family send certain vegetables to school with the children, and perhaps a bit of meat; and she would make a big pot of soup for us all on these cold days. We could hardly wait for lunch, as the odor of the soup cooking was so tantalizing. My Mom was teaching me about cooking at home, and I mostly liked to bake cakes, decorating them with red hots or candy hearts. On special days at school, I would bake one and take it to school to share with the others, as there were only thirteen pupils. On the last day of school, what excitement! Parents would bring baskets of food, spread boards across the desks and load them with all the goodies. After eating and visiting awhile, we would clean up the things, then we would go outside and play games for a time. Of course, ball games was the favorite of the older ones. I sure have some wonderful memories of those times; and too, I wasn't old enough to be concerned about making a living.

In order to graduate from the eighth grade, we had to pass county examinations, so many schools had to gather at Lamont, where we were given these tests. These, then, were sent to a board of school officials at Eureka, the county seat, for grading. How anxiously we awaited the results. Graduation exercises were held at a large hall in Eureka, where all the graduates of the county met. I had helped Mom at the Bennett home, and Mrs. Bennett gave me material of changeable silk (she had bought some for her two daughters who were to graduate at the same time); and my sister, Emma, made my dress. She curled my hair on rags for the occasion. Mom had bought me new black slippers. How nervous I was, but I felt great as I met with all the other students to reach out for my diploma; and then later, I was taken to a nearby studio and had my picture taken.

Since Mom and I had no transportation only when someone came for us, it was decided for me to be able to go to high school that I would have to live with my sister, Amanda's family, and come home only on weekends. Different members lived with my Mom at this time, sometimes for just a short time, Emma and John Strauch, or Jake and Leila. Amanda lived two miles beyond Virgil, so a girl named Alice Wagner drove a small homemade, closed-in bus, pulled by one horse, picking up several children and taking them to school. My nephew Lewis and I was among them. Just before the fall term began, Mom and I was walking to her job at Bennetts in Hilltop, going down the tracks as usual; and she agreed I could have my hair cut, as she wouldn't be with me to comb and braid it each day. We stopped at the Irene Henson home and asked her to cut my hair. What a strange feeling I had; but when she finished, it felt so good, but Mom almost cried.

After a short period of time, one weekend when I came home and it had been quite stormy for awhile, we noticed the river rising some, but thought it was nothing to be alarmed about. Jake and Leila were with Mom at this

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time; but when we awoke in the morning, we found the river overflowing the banks, and our route of getting to higher ground cut off. Debris of all kinds was floating downstream, including haystacks - some with chickens on top as they sought higher and drier spots, old sheds, logs and anything that happened to be in the way of the water's flow, which was very muddy from the fields. Since we could not escape the water, the only thing left for us was to go across the road, which was still accessible, to our neighbors, the Henry Fechtters, as they had a two-story house. We hurriedly put our belongings up as high as possible on tables and beds, never thinking for a moment the water would get that high. Jake chained both his car and John's new Ford roadster to some big trees in the yard; of course, we had to leave the food Mom had canned and the sacks of potatoes we'd raised in the cellar under the house, as we had no time left because the water was rising so rapidly and very swift. Fechtters' house was really full, and they had a large family, besides relatives that were visiting from Emporia, and now Mom, brother Jake, Leila and their baby son, Clyde, and me.

As the water began coming into the house, the men moved what they could through the narrow stairway to the second floor. We heard later this was the highest the water had ever been, and it was twenty-five years later from that date it got almost that high again. The water rose to six inches in the house. We even felt the house quiver on the foundation, and I heard Jake say to his wife, "If the water gets any higher, I'm going to boost my family up into these big trees standing close to the house". At long last, the rain stopped and the water began to recede as fast as it had come up. The flood left us without drinking water, as it had covered our wells; and all we had was the little that had been brought in before. So cleaning the wells immediately and boiling any water, and being careful with what we had, was very essential. By this time too, it was late evening; and we still couldn't get back to our place, so we rested the best we could for the night. When we woke the next morning, it was sunny and bright; but what a sight that met our eyes, debris everywhere, dead fowl, animals in places where the logs and brush were piled up. Our house was really a mess; it had two large rooms with a smaller passageway between, and this had fallen into the cellar. Blankets, clothes and what furniture we had was soaked, as the water had been sixteen inches high in our house; complete ruin everywhere. The two cars were still there, fastened to the trees; but they too had to be overhauled before being driven. At my sister Amanda's house where I stayed and went to school, the water was up to the middle of the windows; and she had to put the children up on the table until Earl could get to his boat and get them out. They then took them to his boss's two-story house upstream. The people of the community got together to help each other, to gather up trash and animals, as this all had to be burned to keep down disease; all the community had to have vaccinations to keep from getting sick; and oh, how I hated to take those shots. As always, people survived the terrible ordeal. Many farmers lost a lot of stock and feed, and was much worse off than we were; but all began to continue on. The Red Cross gave our storekeeper, Mr. Bennett, two hundred dollars for us. We were allowed two dollars a week in groceries, but Mom had to work for the Bennetts to pay it back.

It was the year of 1927, Jake and family had moved to the oil lease, where he worked; and Emma's family was staying with Mom, as I continued to

finish my first year of high school. I had a lot of fun this Freshman year; besides studying, I was in glee club, and we put on an operetta. I tried out for basketball, but had a severed tendon in my right ankle; and they wouldn't accept me. I also flunked algebra, along with several classmates. I have many good memories from those days; and as I write, many more keep popping up, which would fill many more pages.

Emma and her husband, John, were having many problems creeping in; and they began to get worse. My brother, John, and Earl's brother, Lester, had been working in Oklahoma in the harvest; and they came home to our place about this time, saying they had a place in Shidler and were going back there, and John was going to work on an oil lease. Emma decided to leave her husband, John Strauch, and go with them, as she had taken all she could. They all left one morning, Emma, her two sons, Billy and Edwin, brother John, and Lester, after John Strauch left for work. When he returned that evening and discovered them gone, he took out after them to try to catch up with them and talk Emma into coming back to him. He caught up with them, but she refused to return, so he took Edwin and brought him back to our place. John and Edwin continued to live here at Mom's until Edwin completed his first year of school. Then, they moved to Emporia, and John worked as a mechanic in a garage, and sent Edwin to school.

Through our letters with my brother, John, and Emma in Shidler, Oklahoma, they persuaded Mom to say we would come and live with them, as we were now so afraid of the river. We had no transportation, only with neighbors; and they didn't want us alone. We even had to depend on neighbors in getting our wood from the timber and getting it sawed, taking us to get groceries, etc. John had bought an old Dodge coupe, and he and Emma came for us. We loaded all our belongings (which now wasn't much, since the flood had destroyed a good deal), even Mom's old rocker on the truck lid of the car and headed for Shidler on the 4th of July, 1927. We hoped this would be a new beginning for us.

We arrived in Shidler late in the afternoon, after a long tiring trip, packed into that coupe with me sitting on Mom's lap all the way. Mom had a large blister on the side of her foot, where it had been against the side of the car with an exhaust pipe beneath; she hadn't said a word about the pain she was feeling. We were immediately welcomed by friends of theirs - one especially, Myrtle Standage, who became my lifelong friend.

Since it was still the fourth of July, John wanted to celebrate a bit, and began to show off by lighting firecrackers, some of which he placed under cans to see them fly into the air. He then decided to try a metholatum jar; and as it exploded, glass flew in every direction, a piece hitting him on the leg. He grabbed his leg, then took off for the house, and that ended the celebration. I had lots of fun that summer, making some new friends, going swimming, exploring the town, as I'd never lived in a town that big before. Mom also was looking the place over, getting acquainted and seeking work. Our sisters, Maggie, Amanda, and Laura, and families from Kansas came to visit; and we really enjoyed the time together again. Since the opening of the school was not far off, I began to prepare for it, which in itself would be a big challenge for me, at it was such a large school.

An important incident happened that summer which stands out vividly in my mind, and I think helped me to grow up a little. As I was visiting my new friend, Myrtle, we were laughing and talking when we were shaken to our feet by a loud explosion nearby. We ran to the door and could see smoke drifting toward our way and smell an awful odor. As we stood talking, Myrtle's mother came in, and we were told that workers, digging places to put large tanks and ditches for pipes at a new service station being built, had been using dynamite to loosen rocks; and some had exploded prematurely, killing two men. We mourned with the families, even though we didn't know them personally.

Not long after this, Myrtle's father was transferred to Seminole, to another oil lease, so they moved away; and I was left to start to a new school with new faces everywhere alone. It was a scary situation for me, as I was just a green country kid, not making friends easily, but determined to do my best; and soon, I was deep in my new studies, and did make a few new friends, Enomia Crockett, and later Frances Smith, (Frankie, as we called her) also became my lifelong friend. My clothes were not as the other girls most of the time. Many remarks were made, especially by those who had both parents and could give them whatever they needed; so naturally, I was shy and sought my friends very carefully. Winter came with its snow, rain turning to ice, and very cold weather; and I had to walk quite a way to school. Mom was doing some washing, ironing, and housecleaning for a doctor's family, and some laundry for our storekeepers, so she bought me my first coat - a blue one with a fur collar. Before, I had to wear hand me downs and made-over coats.

We all lived in the same house - Emma, Lester, Billy (Emma's son), John, Mom and me. John had a steady job out on the Phillips Oil Lease; Lester had a truck and did hauling, hay, iron, and many other jobs. Emma yearned constantly for her other son, Edwin. She finally decided to go back to Kansas and try to unite her family. In a short time, seeing that she and her husband, John, just couldn't get along; and he wouldn't let her take Edwin, she came back to Shidler where we were living. Lester's jobs were not coming often; so he, Emma, and Billy went to western Oklahoma during harvest - then on to western Kansas in the wheat fields to haul grain.

During the months of April, May and June, we had many storms around that area; cyclones would come up very quickly, usually in the early morning and would really do a lot of damage, like blowing off roofs, tearing up building, and our air field had many airplanes torn apart at times. One time in particular, it had been raining; and the clouds were very dark. Emma was so afraid of storms that she and Lester sat up all night out in the car, watching the storm. About four in the morning, she rushed into the house, awakening Billy, Mom and me, screaming a cyclone is coming, hurry, and we'll go up to our neighbor's cellar. She tried to get John and his new wife to come along, but they said they were not afraid. We started up the hill - Lester carrying Billy, with Emma clutching one arm, and holding Mom with the other. I had Mom's other arm. The wind blew Mom down, and she lost her shoe. She said go on, leave me; but, of course, we wouldn't. A large wooden fence had fallen down across the cellar door, and we had to fight the wind to get the door open and go down in the cellar. Just a short time later, and here came John, his wife, and the neighbors too. The storm went over; and after daybreak, we came out. We had to literally pick our way through the debris of a building

that had fallen down, with nails sticking up all over. The neighbors said the building had blown down before we even had gone to the cellar; but fortunately, we had not stepped on any nails.

Since John had recently married, Emma, Lester, and Billy moved into Lester's sister and brother-in-law, Orris's house. Mom and I stayed with John and Mildred for awhile, but things didn't work out so well; and we went to stay with Emma's family. We really never had a place of our own. Mom continued to work very hard for different families; and as I got older, I began to do babysitting, besides helping Mom with laundry that she brought home to do. Emma and Lester were gone a lot, hauling loads for different people; and it was very hard to make ends meet, as pay was very little. Sometimes, Mom would only receive a dollar for a full day's work. Many times as she came from work, she would stop at the store, and buy a sack of beans; and it took most of her money.

I continued my schooling, making good grades, especially in shorthand and typing, even winning several honors in them - pins and honorable mention. Mom bought me a typewriter, paying for it by two dollar monthly installments. English and Mathematics were not easy for me, but I did finish high school and graduated in May, 1930. Our family celebrated the occasion with ice cream and cake afterwards.

Times were hard, and Lester just couldn't seem to get steady work of hauling with his truck. He and Emma took me and went to western Oklahoma to see if they could find a small farm; and on this trip, I got to meet two of my father's brothers and their families - Uncle John and Uncle Amos. Lester and Emma decided to move out to Grand Valley, leaving Mom and me alone in Orris and Bess Smith's house. I spent much time alone, so while Mom was at work, I put my typewriter to use putting songs on paper that I had learned and singing them, and playing records on a small victrola Mom had bought me.

In those days, our recreation consisted of going to the movies, which were "still" pictures and someone playing the piano for music. We heard about "talking pictures" coming to another town, and I remember going with Bess to see a western, my first. Also, we gathered at different homes, played the victrola and danced, went to house parties, to baseball games, swimming in the summer, and did lots of visiting. It was at house parties that I became interested in guitars, and began to learn a little watching others play. Bess tried to teach me a couple chords. One of my friends had an old guitar, minus most of the strings and a broken bridge. She told me I could have it for six dollars, if I was interested in buying it. I surely was interested; but talking it over with Mom, we just couldn't afford it. A week later, she said I could buy it for four dollars, but I still didn't have the money. Since it was so dilapidated, she finally said I could buy it for two dollars, so I took up her offer fast. Now that I had a broken-down guitar, what was I to do with it? A neighbor friend, Bill Layman, knowing how much I wanted it, offered to repair it for me if I bought the parts. He worked on it very carefully for days. When it was finished with its new bridge and strings (he even put a brace inside to make it stronger), I was tickled pink. (I brought the guitar with me to California in 1935.) I bought a chord book and began to learn a few. I guess I drove my neighbors crazy, strumming on it, singing and then

learning to play the mouth harp along with it. I even accompanied George Tomblin on his violin at some of our house parties.

Things were changing fast, and I visited my friend, Frankie, who at this time was living at home with her mother and brother in Hominy on a farm. Then my friend Myrtle's mother, who had remarried after her divorce, asked if she and her husband, Bill Hilton, could move in with us; and they did, staying the winter of 1930 and 1931. I also visited with Myrtle and her husband and son, who had moved to a farm just outside Ponca City.

Emma wrote me from western Oklahoma, and asked me to come help her, as she was expecting a baby. Lester drove to Shidler in his Ford to get me. I helped them for about six weeks; and this is where I met the man I later married, as he was Lester's half brother and was working for Lester at the time. We had a lot of fun while I was there - swimming, going on picnics, going fishing and to some house parties. After Jimmie was born, they took me back home to Shidler again with Mom. I really began to get restless. I couldn't find any work, only babysitting or ironing the clothes when Mom would bring them home and do the washing. Mom did washings for two men, who ran a grocery store; and sometimes, I would have fifteen to seventeen shirts a week to iron for them. None of this paid very much.

One Sunday after I had been visiting with a friend all afternoon, I came home and found Mom very ill, so I went to a neighbor, Josephine Rice, and asked her for advice and help. She checked Mom over and sent her friend, Felix Henderson for the Doctor. Mom had been working for this family; and hardly before I knew it, the Doctor said I must take her to the hospital immediately at Ponca City. I wrote a quick note for Jo and Felix to mail to Emma, and left for the hospital with the Doctor and his wife. They took Mom into surgery immediately. Felix hurried up to Bess's place to tell her, and she then got word to my sisters in Kansas. Meantime, a friend of mine, Marguerite Meyers, also heard of this and came to Ponca City to be with me. She rented a motel room, so we could be near Mom.

As soon as my note reached Emma, she and her family left immediately to come to us. Meanwhile, my sisters, Amanda, Maggie and Laura had received the message; and they, too, came to help. We did all we could for Mom; and after she was brought home from the hospital, they discussed it and decided I could not take care of Mom, so they would move us back to Kansas, and they would all help. Lester and Emma decided they, too, would move back to Kansas; and again, we found ourselves renting the Evan's place - only this time, it was Lester and Emma. I went with them to western Oklahoma to help make the move, and Mom stayed with Amanda's family. Now, we were back where we started from on July 4, 1927.

Again, I lived with Emma and Lester - sometimes Mom would come out awhile; but most of the time, she stayed with Amanda's family. After awhile, Mom and I wanted to be together and on our own, so our sisters helped us to rent a small house in Virgil, and moved us into it. I managed to get a few jobs; and with our sister's shared vegetables from their gardens, we got along okay. Dan's folks, in the meantime, had been moved to Virgil from western Oklahoma too. Dan and I decided to get married and went to Eureka, the county



seat, and was married by a probate judge that had once been my county superintendant when I was in the eight grade at old District 2. We now needed more room as the two rooms did not suffice, so we moved to the old Morey house. Fourteen months later, Shirley was born here - also Sydney, Emma's daughter. Our husbands needed to be closer to their work, so we later moved to the Evan's place, and they into Virgil.

CALIFORNIA BOUND - 1935

One day, Dan, my Mother, baby Shirley, and I were visiting my sister, Emma, and family out on the oil lease where Lester was tending a pumping station; and as we talked about Dad Smith, who had recently taken his grandson, Jesse Lee Rankin, to California to be with his father, Joe Rankin, our thoughts turned to the letter he had written saying he thought we might be able to get work there too. Someone said, "Let's go to California". We looked at each other, to see the reaction; and before we left to go home that afternoon, we had decided to do it.

We had nothing to lose, and perhaps much to gain. Another cold, snowy winter was coming up, already we had felt its chill; and we had no steady work in sight, just helping farmers a day or so a week with little pay, trying to cut wood and keep warm, miles from town and stores - rather a very unattractive and hard way to live. We began to make plans immediately, a letter from Dad Smith, telling Dan if he would bring his sister, Pearl, along, we could drive his old Dodge he had left behind, helped us make up our minds. We decided we would take only what we would need and have the rest of our belongings auctioned off, which when done, garnered us about \$40.70. I still have the papers of this transaction. We traded our old car, a Whippet Coupe, for a very large tent to use on the way out.

By this time, the weather was really cold, with snow on the ground. Emma, Lester, Jim and Sydney came to our place, so we could decide what to take along. We washed all the blankets, our clothes too, and had to dry them in the old Fechter house that Dad Smith and Pearl had lived in, as they would freeze as fast as they were put on the line outside. Pearl told her friends we were leaving; and they all came out to sing, play music, dance; and of course, they brought their liquor, as a farewell party. We did not fully appreciate this, as we had worked so hard preparing to leave and were so tired.

It was so cold, the ground was covered with snow; and our hands were numb by the time the two cars and trailers were loaded. All our worldly possessions were packed in these vehicles. Lester's trailer had a washing machine, filled with canned food we had put up, a crate of chickens on front, with their dog, Silver, lying on top, and dishes, trunks of clothes, etc., in it. We had a large chest of Dad Smith's with tools, etc. Pearl's belongings, and ours and Mom's things were in our trailer with the big tent on top to cover. Now, we were leaving for good the place where my Mom and I had lived for many years - first, with my Dad, then by ourselves, then with different members of our family through the years. And now, Dan, Shirley, my Mom and I had lived here for about ten months.

We drove by my sister, Amanda, and family's place south of Virgil, Kansas, on the Ed Harris ranch to bid them goodbye. It was very cold, and we had a bed on the back seat of the car for Shirley to sleep on, and we had blankets to wrap around ourselves to keep warm. Emma wanted to stop in El Dorado, Kansas, to see an old friend, Gladys Beuchat for a few minutes. She had been teaching school there for a number of years. By the end of the first day, we drove in to Goodwell, Oklahoma, and decided to spend the night. We found a place to put up our tent. Unfortunately, it was beside a noisy railroad track. Not being used to the noise, we all got very little rest,

besides it being so cold.

The men, Lester and Dan, decided the big chest of Dad Smith's was just too heavy and hard to handle, so they would ship it by freight to California, which they did. Then again, the trailers and cars were loaded; and we moved on. That was the only night we used the tent on our entire trip. This was really an adventure for us, and we wanted to see everything possible as we traveled on. When we got in to Logan, New Mexico, we decided to get a cabin for the eight of us, as we had been so cold the previous night, and then perhaps we could get more rest.

On the third morning, after loading the vehicles, we found ours would not run. The men worked on it all day, but it still wouldn't start. They found it needed some parts, so decided to drive to the biggest town around, which was Tumacacari, and go to a used car yard and try to get the parts. We spent that night in the same cabin. The men repaired our car the next morning, and we left Logan, New Mexico. Loaded so heavily, the cars would not travel fast; but we took in all the sights, stopping to prepare our meals, to rest, as there were two small children to care for, and my Mom, who got very tired. The rivers, valleys, gorges, and the mountains were sometimes frightening, sometimes awesome - all new and strange to us; but we were enjoying every moment. We were trying to avoid the mountains as much as possible and had taken a southerly route going down to Lordsburg, New Mexico, and there we spent the night in a cabin. At night, Emma and I would wash out the baby's diapers, and the needed garments; then, the next day, as we drove along, we'd hang them out the car window to dry.

In Arizona, we went through Globe, and decided to go and see the Coolidge Dam; and what a sight for us to see - so much water, power - the bigness of it all was hard to take in. Now we began to see soap weeds, mosquito, and cactus, standing so tall and big with their arms outstretched to the sky. Naturally, we had to take pictures with the old box camera as we traveled, it was so breathtaking to us. We spent the night between Phoenix and Yuma. We had heard that at the check point into California, no fruit, feathers, or plants could be taken through, so we packed our old feather ticks and pillows, and shipped them in Yuma to my brother, John's home in El Centro, California, and ate the fruit.

We arrived in El Centro on Tuesday evening the 26th, tired; but so glad we had made it, and decided to rest a few days before traveling on north. My brother, John, hauled fruits, vegetables, and nuts by truck to a large company warehouse in El Centro. He was permitted to get produce from the warehouse if crates, cartons, or boxes had been broken in the hauling to use at his home. While there, he took us to get several sacks of fruits and vegetables, and we really ate hungrily, as we had not seen anything like this before. While we were there visiting, John and Mildred took us to Mexicali, Mexico, to see the sights; but we were not too impressed. We rested, did our laundry, and also spent Thanksgiving with the family, before reloading our trailers and began the last part of our trip to Roseville.

We left El Centro on Saturday, November 30. Being so unfamiliar with avenues, lanes, boulevards, etc., we got lost from Lester's party, going

through Los Angeles. We stopped at a service station for information, and finally found the right road to put us on the right highway again. But by that time, we had completely lost the rest of our family. We traveled all day, but still no sight of them. Each of us thinking the other car was ahead, and each trying to catch up. As night approached, we pulled in at a motel to get a cabin, and left the trailer sticking out so that the others might see it if they passed by.

The next morning, we packed up and drove to a service station for gasoline. Dan told the man our situation and described Lester's vehicle. We found they had spent the night there just a short distance from us. Now, we knew they were ahead of us and drove as fast as we could trying to catch them; meantime, they were doing the same.

We were enjoying seeing the fruit orchards, orange groves, the palm trees so tall and stately, and grape vineyards. It was so wonderful to us. We were on highway 99 and began coming into the mountains, and the motor began to pull down; then, as we would come downgrade, we had to use the brakes more. They called this the Grapevine coming into Bakersfield. As we came around one of these curves, we spotted the red flag on Lester's trailer, so Dan speeded up, and Bang, a tire blew out - the only flat we had on the whole trip. We thought we had lost them again and hurriedly repaired the tire to get back on the road. Going downgrade, Dan started riding the brakes more often; and we could see the wooden spokes in the wheels were getting hotter and beginning to smoke. We spotted a service station ahead; and as we pulled in, there was Lester's vehicle - it too was hot. Dan jumped out and put water on the wheels to cool them down, much to the astonishment of the attendant. We were so glad to see the rest of the family.

As we left Bakersfield, we saw fields and fields of grapes, and more palm trees, and more orange groves, besides orchards of fruit trees. We came in to Roseville on Riverside Boulevard, on December 1, 1935, on our daughter, Shirley Ann's first birthday. We pulled into a service station, but Lester stopped on the opposite side of the street. Dan inquired about some old friends, the Patterson brothers, who lived in Roseville; and they, too, had a service station. Dad Smith had told us in his letters that they would direct us out to his place. We were told their station was closed on Sunday, but we could go to their home, which was close by. As we pulled back out on the street, another car pulled in between Lester's and our vehicle; and we turned off on the street to the Pattersons, and Lester did not see us, so drove on toward Loomis. We got our directions and had no problem finding Dad Smith's, going out Rocky Ridge Road, past Banducci's olive orchard, while Lester drove on to Loomis, knowing that Dad Smith received his mail on a Loomis Rural Route. So he inquired of the mail carrier of that route and got directions, arriving there just a short time afterwards.

After a brief visit, Lester and Dan put up our big tent; and we spent our first night in it. Dad Smith told the men he had heard of some woodcutting jobs up in the mountains near Coloma. The next morning, they went to see a man named Barkey and got the job. Again, we loaded everything and started for this job the next morning. The crate of chickens on Lester's trailer, jarred loose; and chickens flew all around as we drove along. What a job gathering

them up, even with Silver, the dog's help. We set up our tent on a hill, but it wasn't a satisfactory place, so we decided to move to a flatter place, and where there was a mountain on one side of us to cut down the wind. The men began cutting down trees. Emma and I helped trim and burn the brush, getting poison oak all over us from the smoke. It rained a lot while we were working, but we didn't mind the rain because we had a job, even though it wasn't much money. Sometimes, we had to rob the children's piggy bank to get some bread. My Mother took care of the children, Jimmie, Sydney, and Shirley. More rain, until finally the only dry spot in the tent was where Emma's victrola sat; and to top it off, Sydney got sick and had to be taken to a doctor at Auburn. Oh, how Emma hated that crooked and high road to Auburn.

Before Christmas, the men had to go to Sacramento to get the car's license, and their driver's permit, now that we were in a different state. We bought a few Christmas gifts after our payday. During the time we were in the mountains cutting wood, Dan's sister Ann, came from Oklahoma to be with her son, Jesse Lee, daughter, Stella, and brought her daughter, Dorothy, to live with her ex-husband, Joe Rankin. We went to spend the holiday with them and Dad Smith and Pearl. It seemed every time we drove through the mountains, our daughter, Shirley, and my Mom would get very sick. We had been hearing that Mr. Barkey was very angry, because Emma's dog, Silver, had got loose from her chain, and some dogs got in a fight over her, and one got a broken leg. We also had loaned another worker our car, who drove it to Sacramento, and ran it out of oil, wrecking the motor. They told us at Christmas dinner, a neighbor, Mr. Banducci, who owned the olive orchard, might hire us to knock olives, which was used in making olive oil, and that he even had some old buildings that we might live in, so the men went over and got a job.

Since we had no car, Dad Smith loaned us his old Dodge coupe to bring our trailer out of the mountains. We went back to get our things and our paycheck and quit the woodcutting job. We settled into a small cabin and started to work in the olive fields, spreading large canvass on either side of a tree. We then used long poles and ladders to knock the olives down on the canvas, until it was full, pulling them from one tree to another, then loading them into fifty pound lugs for others to clean the leaves and limbs out. It was hard work, and sometimes very cold on our hands; but we were so glad for the job.

We were told that California Land Company had taken over many orange groves that people had not been able to pay taxes on, etc, and we could pick the oranges for our use - which we did, and we were so grateful. After our first paycheck came, Dan and I bought a used Chevrolet Coupe. We heard that the Pacific Fruit Express Company would be hiring some men, so Lester and Dan went to see about it, before we would go work in the olive fields. Dan was hired March, 1935, so we moved into a small house not far from the P. F. E. yards, and Lester finally found work on a Gold Dredger after some time. Meanwhile, Emma, Lester, Dan's sister, Ann, and I got jobs pruning grapevines. Mr. Alex Keller, who worked at the yards also, told Dan of a piece of ground for sale, so we all went to look at; and Lester, Emma, Dan and I bought it from Mrs. Ralph Dobbins for \$250.00 for 2.43 acres for \$15.00 down and \$10.00 a month. We purchased this on March 17, 1935. We divided the land down the middle, each paying half the price, set up our big tent on the ground and

2. The second part of the document focuses on the implementation of the proposed changes. It details the steps involved in the transition process, from the initial planning phase to the final execution. This section also addresses the potential challenges that may arise during the implementation and provides strategies to overcome them.

3. The third part of the document discusses the impact of the proposed changes on the organization's overall performance. It highlights the expected benefits, such as increased efficiency and cost savings, and provides a detailed analysis of the potential risks. This section also includes a timeline for the implementation of the changes and a list of the key personnel responsible for each stage of the process.

4. The fourth part of the document provides a summary of the findings and conclusions. It reiterates the importance of the proposed changes and the need for continued monitoring and evaluation. This section also includes a list of recommendations for future research and a final statement of the author's conclusions.

moved in, having lived only one month in the house by the P. F. E. and paying only one month's rent of \$7.00. This was April, 1936.

We got our lumber from the P. F. E. box cars that were dismantled, paying fifty cents a trailer load, and began building our two-room house, while Lester and Emma did the same - building their garage first to live in, meanwhile, living in the tent. Emma and I continued to work at whatever we could find available at the time. In due season, we cut grapes, gathered figs, oranges, nuts, got peaches by the trailer load and canned them, gathered cherries and canned them. Also, in the fall, we knocked olives again for Mr. Banducci and worked at the Lincoln cannery for peaches.

Our family all followed us to California. Amanda and family came after school was out in June. Then Maggie and Family, Laura and Pete, then Jake and family came in 1936.

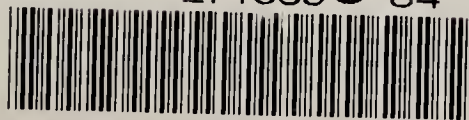
We sold the small house to the Johnny Pope family and moved into this one just before Donna was born in December, 1939.

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